Lewis Tappan,

New York, March 15 1838.

PHELPS MSS.

Dear Brother Phelps,

20 On the receipt of your letter of the 1st inst I read it to two or three leading members of the Third Church, and afterwards consulted Mr Duffield on the subject. Mr Johnston retains so large an influence with the church that it is not likely they would alter the character of the church from a Presbyterian to a Congregational one. If then an arrangement ~~could not~~ cannot be made by which you ~~could~~ can be pastor of a presbyterian church I see not how they can consistently give you a call. I annex a copy of Mr Duffields note to me, & will leave it for you to say whether I shall do anything further in the premises.

March 14/38

"I have read the letter of brother Phelps & think that if he would confer with some of the brethren of the Presbytery his mind would be relieved from some misapprehensions under which it now labors. The right or authority of a Presbytery to interfere with the concerns of an individual Church is one conceded by consent of the Churches & of all parties, but only in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. — Dictatorial or absolute controlling power the Presbytery does not possess. Except in

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in matters of review by agreement submitted or appeal or for advice on application or in cases of gross outrage & disorder alleged by common fame to exist in a church the Presby have no right to interfere with the affairs of private Cong.ns — Their sessions & the brotherhood manage their affairs without the aid or control of Presbytery. Any power claimed & exercised over the churches beyond what by the constitution they have consented to is ~~unscriptious~~ usurpations.

The Presbytery judge of the qualifications of their own members & not of church members. Brother Phelps might or might not be examined by the Presbytery. Some Presbyteries do & some do not examine persons coming from other denominations before admitting. Formerly the adoption of the confession of faith & Form of Govt. was thought sufficient. The examination of ministers is an innovation on Presbyterianism from Congregationalism of quite a modern date.

I have some doubts whether the views of brother Phelps might not be so construed as to render it impracticable for him to adopt the formularies of the Pres. Church. Originally the individual church recognizes no superior authority than that of J. Christ i.e. He has given her full power to govern herself according to his laws. The Presbyterians & Congregationalists are agreed.

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But Presbyterians allege & agree that they may have permanent counsellors & advisers to whom they promise respect & obedience in cases of appeal & difficulty in which the individual church cannot herself decide. Congregationalists recognise councils as proper in such cases but do not promise respect & obedience to their advice nor will they name a permanent body for that purpose, as we have in the Presbytery. This is the main difference. I think if brother Phelps views were more fully expressed, and the principles of Presbyterianism more distinctly apprehended by him, he would find no difficulty in uniting with the Presbytery.

"With sentiments of respect
I remain your friend &c
(Sign'd) Geo Duffield"

The church gave a call to Mr Parker on the urgent recommendation of Mr Johnson. He hoped Parker would become an abolitionist after he should come here! - In other words suppose he would suit but preachable to his location, as he has done at N.O. I fear. There is no anti-abolition in the 3 & 4th but I know of, nor anything to keep a man's tongue tied on any subject. I think a pastor in whom they had confidence would do as he liked. It would gratify my friends here much gratification if you could reside here

Single paid

PAID

Rev. A. A. Phelps,

Boston.

NEW-YORK
MAR 16
Mail.